

tastes, desires, etc., of that society at that time, to which all these modes of action appeal and of whose existence they are evidence.

65. What is goodness or badness of the mores. It is most

important to notice that, for the people of a time and place, their

own mores are always good, or rather that for them there can

be no question of the goodness or badness of their mores. The

reason is because the standards of good and right are In the

mores. If the life conditions change, the traditional folkways

may produce pain and loss, or fail to produce the same good

as formerly. Then the loss of comfort and ease brings doubt

into the judgment of welfare (causing doubt of the pleasure of

the gods, or of war power, or of health), and thus disturbs the

unconscious philosophy of the mores. Then a later time will

pass judgment on the mores. Another society may also pass

judgment on the mores. In our literary and historical study of

the mores we want to get from them their educational value,

which consists in the stimulus or warning as to what is, in its

effects, societally good or bad. This may lead us to reject or

neglect a phenomenon like infanticide, slavery, or witchcraft,

as an old "abuse" and "evil," or to pass by the crusades as a

folly which cannot recur. Such a course would be a great error.

| Everything in the mores of a time and place must be regarded

as justified with regard to that time and place. " Good " mores

are those which are well adapted to the situation. " Bad " mores

are those which are not so adapted. The mores are not so

stereotyped and changeless as might appear, because they are

forever moving towards more complete adaptation to conditions

and interests, and also towards more complete

adjustment to each other. People in mass have never made or kept up a custom in order to hurt their own interests. They have made innumerable errors as to what their interests were and how to satisfy them, but they have always aimed to serve their interests as well as they could. This gives the standpoint for the student of the mores. All things in them come before him on the same plane. They all bring instruction and warning. They all have the same relation to power and welfare. The mistakes in them are component parts of them. We do not study them in order to approve